



A Study by
the Institute for Ecumenical Research
Strasbourg 1990

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COMMUNIO / KOINONIA

*A New Testament-Early Christian Concept
and its Contemporary Appropriation and Significance*

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FOREWORD

For over a decade, the self-understanding and task of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) have again been intensely debated. The LWF Assembly in Budapest (1984) made important clarifications but did not end the discussion. As the LWF has considered restructuring, new aspects of the question have been opened up, and the question has taken on a new urgency.

The concept of communion (**communio/koinonia**) has been a focus for discussion at least since Budapest. This study of the meaning, historical background, and present use of the concept is offered by the Strasbourg Institute for Ecumenical Research as a contribution to these discussions.

This study has three chapters :

The **first chapter** can be called the basic text. It attempts to outline the essential elements for an understanding of **communio/koinonia** in a straightforward way. The hurried reader can, if necessary, stop with this chapter. The following chapters go into more detail, grounding and expanding what is said in the first chapter.

The **second chapter** describes the New Testament origins of the concept of communion and its appropriation by the ancient Church and the Lutheran Reformation. Here one can clearly see that **communio** is not a new concept but is anchored deeply in the Christian and reformation tradition.

The **third chapter** explores the growing significance of this concept both for Lutheranism and for other churches. The questions before Lutherans today are being discussed in similar ways among other Christian World Communions and in the ecumenical movement. Here one can see both the common elements in the interpretation of

communio by the different churches and the accents and aspects specific to each.

This study can be viewed as in part a summary and in part an elaboration of the larger study by Eugene L. Brand, **Toward a Lutheran Communion : Pulpit and Altar Fellowship** (LWF Report 26, 1988).

We thank those who provided critical remarks on earlier drafts of this study, particularly Prof. Georg Kretschmar (Munich) and Prof. Jürgen Roloff (Erlangen).

Strasbourg, January 1, 1990

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CHAPTER I

THE MEANING OF « COMMUNIO/KOINONIA »

1. Why Are We Talking About « Communio/Koinonia » ?

A sign of the times is the attempt to find community among Christians and churches and to overcome division, isolation, and complacency. Churches of the same confessional family come together across political and national boundaries, discovering anew that they belong together and have a responsibility for each other. Churches of different traditions and confessions seek unity beyond their historical divisions.

Although this movement toward greater unity has already borne much fruit, it has not yet reached its end. Churches of the same confessional family seek a fellowship that can deepen and strengthen their newly conscious unity. The reconciliation of previously divided churches cannot stop at partial agreements and peaceful coexistence ; it pushes on to a fuller fellowship and communion.

Organization and structures are only external forms of these efforts. At heart they concern the **quality and depth of our common life as Christians and as churches.**

- What is the basis of our fellowship and what holds it together ?
- How do we experience this fellowship and how do we express it ?
- How do we relate to each other, respecting our differences and sharing our needs and weaknesses, riches and joys ?
- Can we depend on the stability and permanence of our fellowship ?
- How do we maintain our fellowship : overcome conflicts, avoid discrimination, and resist isolation and splintering ?
- Can we act together, not only for each other within the churches, but even more for others beyond the churches, for the world ?

In relation to these questions about the **quality of our common life as Christians and as churches** the concept « **communio/koinonia** » has recently proved illuminating.

2. « Communio/Koinonia » Is Not a New Concept.

The **New Testament** (see below, II.1) uses the term « **koinonia** » to speak of the communion of Christians with God the Father, of their communion with and in Christ, and of their fellowship in the Holy Spirit. This communion or fellowship is based on God's Word. It is a communion of worship and prayer. It means participation through Baptism in Christ's death and resurrection. The celebration of the Eucharist, where Christians gather to have communion with their Lord, is **koinonia**. **Koinonia** among Christians and congregations is expressed and realized in the sharing of joys and sorrows, needs and riches.

The concept « **communio/koinonia** » was also central for the **ancient Church** (see below, II.2). In the West the concept was taken up into the Apostles' Creed, which describes the Church as « the communion of saints. » Like the New Testament, the ancient Church closely interrelated fellowship among churches and fellowship in the Eucharist as the meal of our common participation in the Lord and his salvation. Church fellowship must also be fellowship in the Eucharist, and both must be accompanied by fellowship in the apostolic faith.

The **Lutheran Reformation** (see below, II.3) appropriated the « **communio** » concept with which the Apostles' Creed describes the Church. The Church, « the communion of saints, » is « the assembly of all believers. » This « holy community » (**sancta communio**) is visible and recognizable especially in the proclamation of the Gospel in Word and sacraments. The « holy community » is gathered together and lives as the Holy Spirit awakens faith in Christ by communicating his saving work through Word and sacraments.

*« **Communio/koinonia** » is thus not a new or exclusively modern concept. As a biblical concept, it is part of the heritage of all churches and is familiar within all traditions. All churches should, indeed, **must** reflect on this concept as they seek to understand aright the quality of the common life of Christians and churches and to give this common life a concrete form.*

In fact, today « **communio** » plays a central role **in all churches and confessional families** when they state what they are as churches and what fellowship among Christians and churches means (see below, III.1).

« **Communio** » also plays a decisive role today **in the ecumenical movement and in ecumenical dialogues** as they seek to describe and realize the desired unity of the churches (see below, III.3).

3. What Does « Communio/Koinonia » Mean ?

3.1. The Church is a human fellowship or communion (**communio**). Nevertheless, it is not a mere association on the basis of human conditions, interests, or efforts. Only as persons have communion with Christ through faith do they have communion with one another. Communion with Christ comes about through the preaching of the Gospel, which awakens and is

embraced by faith, and through the sacraments, which strengthen and are received by faith.

*The concept « **communio** » means : The Church as a human fellowship or communion is always a communion **in Christ**. Its foundation is always communion with Christ through faith and participation in his saving work.*

3.2. Communion with Christ means participation in his passion and resurrection. Similarly, the communion of believers with each other implies that the joys and sufferings of individuals, their riches and poverty, their strengths and weaknesses, belong to all and are to be shared.

*The concept « **communio** » means : The fellowship or communion of believers is by nature a fellowship **in solidarity**. Solidarity is not optional. It impels a common participation in material and spiritual needs, in material and spiritual resources.*

3.3. Communion with Christ calls for a comprehensive commitment throughout one's life and work. Similarly, the communion of believers with each other implies commitment. It can grow by stages; but where it seeks full realization, it must be a mutually committed and thus reliable fellowship, always and everywhere, at both the local and universal levels. Its integrity permits no complacency, no self-segregation, no mutual condemnations, and no unjust discrimination.

The reliability, integrity, and mutual commitment within the fellowship impels concrete life and action :

in pulpit and altar fellowship. This fellowship presupposes fellowship in the confession of the faith and includes fellowship in the office of Word and sacraments.

in common actions and decisions which grow out of communion and agreement in faith and confession. In these actions and decisions, fellowship and agreement take on an authoritative character.

*The concept « **communio** » means : The fellowship or communion of believers is by nature a **committed** fellowship. Commitment is not optional ; it impels the community toward common life and action.*

3.4. Communion with Christ is fellowship with the totality of believers throughout time and space. Similarly, the communion of believers with each other is a universal communion. No individual generation or epoch can separate itself from what has gone before. No separately organized church can isolate itself from the universal Church, which ties the churches together through its origin in the normative apostolic mission given by the risen Christ.

*The concept « **communio** » means : The fellowship or communion of believers is simultaneously particular and universal. Repeatedly, historical challenges arise in the face of which the relation to the universal Church is decisive for the particular church and its decisions. Conversely, the needs of a particular church demand action and decision from the universal fellowship.*

3.5. Communion with Christ includes in its totality and universality a multiplicity of individual pieties, gifts, and tasks. Similarly, the communion of believers with each other is a fellowship in which differences are not merely tolerated, but each is given room to realize its special excellence for the sake of the multiform mission of the Church.

*The concept « **communio** » means : The fellowship or communion of believers is not a coerced and prescribed uniformity. It realizes itself in a **variety of forms**. It lives and works through the multiplicity of gifts it receives and the variety of tasks placed before it.*

3.6. Christ seeks to bring all persons into communion with himself. Similarly, the fellowship or communion of believers opens itself to the world in missionary outreach, human service, and social action. Its being and action are a sign and instrument for the unity and peace of all humanity.

*The concept « **communio** » means : The fellowship or communion of believers looks beyond itself. It lives from its communion with the Lord, who is Lord and Savior of all creation and serves him as **sign and instrument for the salvation of the world**.*

CHAPTER II

« COMMUNIO/KOINONIA » IN NEW TESTAMENT AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

1. « Koinonia » in the New Testament

« **Koinonia** » has a wide meaning in the New Testament. It ties together a number of basic concepts such as unity, life together, faith, and sharing. It is also related to a variety of other New Testament images and concepts such as the « body of Christ » (e.g., 1 Cor. 12 ; Rom. 12), the Johannine expressions « being in » and « remaining in » (e.g., John 14 :20,23 ; 1 John 3 :19-24 ; 4 :15-16) and the parable of the vine and the branches (John 15 :1-10) (1). The basic meaning of the verbal form, « **koinoneo**, » is « to share, participate or have part in, have something in common or act together. » The noun « **koinonia** » signifies « participation, fellowship, community. » (2)

The different uses of « koinonia » and related words in the New Testament may be summarized briefly under the following headings :(3)

1.1. **Koinonia** is participation in Christ. According to a key text for understanding the concept, Christ is the basis and source of **koinonia** (1 Cor. 10 :16-21). Through his broken body, he unites all those who share in him. Just as the broken body of Christ is one, it follows that all those who participate in sharing the bread and the cup become one. Through Christ, they are united and bound to him and to one another. The unity thus created by Christ is one that puts a demand on those incorporated into him. They are called to preserve and not to abuse the unity they have with him and with one another (v. 17). **Koinonia** is a gift. Its central point is participation in Christ. Those who take part in him become through him an indivisible unity - a communion.

From this concept « participation in Christ, » Paul develops the image « the body of Christ. » The two ideas are tied together (1 Cor. 10 :17). The worshipping community, i.e., the Church, gathered around the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11 :20-24) shares in Jesus Christ. (4) It is united with him into one body (1 Cor. 12 :12f). Those who share in the Supper, and thus share in Jesus Christ, become one with him. The community is thus the

body of Christ and participates in him and with one another. The many who are divided come together into one fellowship. Breaking bread together and sharing all things was thus a central factor in the life of the early Church (Acts 2 :44-46 ; 4 :35). This union with Christ is the basis for the commitment to solidarity with one another, mutual concern, and sharing.

1.2. **Koinonia** is manifested above all in Baptism and in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Those who are baptized into Christ become one with him and with one another (Rom. 6 :4-11 ; 1 Cor. 12 :13). In the Lord's Supper, Christ is present as the host. The members share his body and his blood (1 Cor. 11 :17-27) and thus become his companions. They are united with him. In this communion, there is no place for the party spirit which divides the community. Mutual consideration and care must be present in their gathering. They all become part of the communion that transcends all social or economic differences. In sharing the same bread and in drinking the same cup, they become one reconciled community. Their divisions are overcome and they become one body. This fellowship demands brotherly and sisterly conduct in the Church. Neglecting such conduct breaks up the **koinonia**. Being guests of the one Lord presupposes and leads to concern for and unity with one another.

Closely related is the « Fellowship in the Gospel » which signifies participation in and appropriation of the salvation made available by Christ (1 Cor. 9 :23). It is receiving and sharing the faith in the company of God and others (Ph. 6). It expresses a state of close union with others in the proclamation of the Gospel and the attendant sufferings (2 Cor. 8 :23 ; Phil. 1 :5,7). Such fellowship means sharing the Word and the common prayer of the faithful (Acts 2 :42). Such participants are **koinonoi** (partners) one of the other, and thus bound to one another (Phlm. 17 ; 2 Cor. 8 :23). They extend each other « the right hand of fellowship » (Gal. 2 :9) by which the unity of the Church is affirmed and solemnly sealed. The churches of the Jews and Gentiles, circumcised and uncircumcised, are brought into one fellowship through Christ.

1.3. **Koinonia** signifies participation and sharing in the sufferings and joys of one another. (5) Primarily, it means suffering with Christ and taking part in his cross (Phil. 3 :10 ; Col. 1 :24 ; 1 Peter 4 :13 ; 5 :1). The spiritual union that binds Christ and the believer means that the believers identify and suffer with Christ (Rom. 8 :17 ; Gal. 2 :19). **Koinonia** is sharing in the sufferings of Christ and in the sufferings of the fellow believer (Heb. 10 :33). Mutuality of suffering is grounded in participation in Christ. A church becomes one with the apostle in this suffering (2 Cor. 1 :6,7 ; 7 :3) ; the Philippian church shares in the sufferings of the apostle Paul (Phil. 4 :14). This connection is expressed concretely when a church provides for the material needs of the apostle and supports him through its gifts (vv. 15,16).

1.4. **Koinonia** is expressed in sharing what one has with others. (6) This aspect of the meaning of « **koinonia** » is seen in Paul's collections among the churches in Asia for the church in Jerusalem (Rom. 15 :26 ; 2 Cor. 9 :13). This collection was the visible sign and symbol of unity of the different churches, in this case Jews and Gentiles. It was an expression of the

essence of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. « **Koinonia** » here carries the dynamic sense of making the other a participant in one's riches through a contribution to the other's well-being. The monetary collection is itself called « fellowship » (**koinonia**, Rom. 15 :26 ; cp. Heb. 13 :16). The material gifts are related to the spiritual gifts in such a way that they flow between one another (Rom. 15 :27). There is reciprocal sharing to meet the needs of each community and sustain the whole. There is a mutual giving and receiving on the basis of a fellowship that already exists. (7) Christians are exhorted to share (Gal. 6 :6 ; Rom. 12 :13).

This sharing does not require riches but occurs even amid « extreme poverty, » as among the churches in Macedonia (2 Cor. 8 :1-4), who « first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God. » This accords with spirit of Christ, who himself « became poor for your sake, to make you rich out of his poverty » (2 Cor. 8 :9). The giving based on **koinonia** is an act of faith in God and not merely an act of generosity. It results from a relation which constrains the parties to empathize and share resources with one another (Rom. 12 :13 ; Heb. 13 :16) because of their unity in the Lord.

1.5. *Christ creates **koinonia** because he is in fellowship with the Father.* Father and Son are one (e.g., John 10 :3 ; 14 :9-11). This unity enables the believers to have fellowship with God and fellowship with one another (1 John 1 :3,6,7 ; cp. 2 Peter 1 :4). It is God who calls « the saints » into « the fellowship of his Son » (1 Cor. 1 :9). This is also a fellowship in and through the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 13 :13 ; Phil 2 :1).

1.6. ***Koinonia** has an eschatological dimension.* Not only is it a present reality, but it points to a greater and more complete fulfillment at the end-time (1 Cor. 9 :23). Even if the present is lived in suffering, there is still hope of sharing in a glory that will come (Rom. 8 :17 ; 1 Peter 4 :13 ; 5 :1). There is a firm faith that sharing in suffering will be followed by sharing in consolation (2 Cor. 1 :7).

2. « **Koinonia/Communio** » in the Ancient Church

As in the New Testament, so in the ancient Church the communion of the believers with the triune God and with each other was described in a variety of ways. In earliest times, « **koinonia**, » « **communio**, » and derived words referred particularly to common participation in Christ in the Eucharist. « **Koinonia** » and « **communio** » could thus become titles for the Eucharist.

An important example is the formula « **communion of the saints** » (**communio sanctorum**), known in the West particularly through its inclusion in the Apostles' Creed. This phrase can already be found in texts from the late 4th century. The earliest examples are from the Eastern church. (8) Most likely, the phrase originally referred to the communion in sacred things, i.e., participation in Christ through the consecrated bread and wine. This interpretation, with its allusion to Paul's comments about **koinonia** with Christ's body and blood (1 Cor. 10 :16), can also be found in the Western church. In the West, however, the phrase came gradually to mean what

is does today : the communion of Christians one with another, not only within the earthly Church, but with the faithful throughout the ages.

The two interpretations of « **communio sanctorum** » are closely interrelated--participation in the eucharistic gifts and the communion or fellowship of the faithful. The communion of the faithful is rooted in their connection with the crucified and resurrected Christ and is realized in their common unity with Christ in the celebration of the Eucharist. Those who partake of the one bread become one body (cp. 1 Cor. 10 :17) and enter into communion one with another.

Fellowship in the Eucharist is unthinkable, however, without *fellowship in the faith*. Only the baptized who share the same faith can come to the table of the Lord. According to Justin Martyr (ca. 155), one can partake of the Eucharist only if one « believes that the things we teach are true, and has received the washing for the forgiveness of sins and for rebirth, and lives as Christ handed down to us » (First Apology, 66.1). This faith takes on a normative form through councils and synods. The faithful are bound together in their agreement with this teaching, which expresses their membership in the Church. Those who do not accept the faith in this normative, doctrinal form exclude themselves from the **communio**. They are practically, if not always formally, excommunicated and separated from the universal fellowship of the Church.

The same is true at the level of relations between churches. A church which does not find in another church that which it holds as fundamental cannot have fellowship in the Eucharist with that church. If the unity of the body of Christ has been broken, then common participation in the eucharistic celebration of Christ's body and blood is impossible. In the ancient Church, the Lord's Supper was never seen as a means to the re-establishment of a lost unity ; it is always the sign of a present unity.

Closely connected was the understanding of the *bishop* as a sign of the **communio** prior to all divisions, first locally, then regionally, and finally universally. Ignatius of Antioch (ca. 110) wrote, that a valid Eucharist can only be celebrated by a bishop or his representative (Smyr. 8.1). They are blessed, he said, who are as closely bound to their bishop « as the Church is to Jesus Christ, and as Jesus Christ is with the Father, so that unity and harmony can prevail everywhere » (Eph. 5.1). It was repeatedly emphasized that fellowship in the Church is realized through subordination to the legitimate bishop : « The bishop is in the Church and the Church in the bishop ; if one is not with the bishop, then one is not in the Church » (Cyprian, Ep. 66.8). As a consequence, the bishops as a whole were increasingly viewed as the visible expression of the unity of the Church. The local church then is in communion with other churches through its bishop (**communio ecclesiastica**). As Irenaeus of Lyon (ca. 190) emphasized, the bishops as successors of the apostles are bearers of the true apostolic tradition (Adv. Haer. III.3.1-2). Doctrinally suspect bishops became all the more vehemently opposed, for their appearance directly threatened the unity of the entire Church as founded by Christ.

3. « Communio/Fellowship » in the Lutheran Reformation

The application of the « **communio** » concept to the Church was self-evident for the Reformation in light of the witness of the New Testament and the ancient Church. CA 7 describes the « one holy Christian Church » as the « *assembly of all believers*. » This « assembly » is *identical with the « communion of saints »* of which the Apostles' Creed speaks (Apol 7.8). The Large Catechism also identifies the « communion of saints » with this « little holy flock or community » (LC II.51). (9)

The specific emphasis of the Reformation--that the Church is an assembly, people, or community of believers, and not primarily a hierarchical institution (Apol. 7.23)--does not reduce the Church to a mere gathering of individuals. CA 7 thus adds to its description : The Church is « the assembly of all believers *among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel*. » An assembly or community is Church because of an event that occurs within it, the proclamation of the Gospel in Word and sacraments. Through this proclamation of the Gospel Christ is present in his saving power and is grasped by faith. As faith unites believers with Christ, they are justified before God, freed from the power of sin, and made members of Christ's body, the Church.

In this reformation interpretation, the meaning of « **koinonia/communio** » for the New Testament and the ancient Church comes to full expression : *The Church as a human community is based solely on communion in faith with Christ*. Luther said that « to have communion or fellowship » means not simply « having some relationship with another person. » Rather it signifies that « many persons share or eat or partake of one common thing. » (10)

As the assembly of all who participate in Christ through faith, the Church is a « fellowship [which] is *inward, spiritual, and invisible, for it is in the heart*. » (11) The Church is « mainly an association of faith and of the Holy Spirit in men's hearts » (Apol 7.5) which extends through space and time. As such a « spiritual communion, » the Church is not however simply invisible. The Church is not « some Platonic republic » (Apol 7.20) which is nowhere to be found. As a « spiritual communion, » the Church is simultaneously a « *fellowship [which] is outward, physical, and visible*. » (12) The Church can be seen and experienced particularly in the community's concrete preaching of the Gospel and its celebration of the sacraments. In these easily perceivable events, the Church comes to be ; without them the Church cannot exist. The communion which is the Church is thus a *visible communion in the proclamation of the Word and the celebration of the sacraments*. At the inter-congregational or inter-church level, this communion finds expression in what would later be called « *altar and pulpit fellowship*. »

Such « altar and pulpit fellowship » includes *communion or fellowship in the divinely instituted office of ministry* (CA 5). This office is commissioned to proclaim the Gospel in Word and sacraments and at the same time to *help protect and maintain communion*. Thus the office, exercised by pas-

tors or bishops, is, by divine right, to exclude from and admit to the visible communion (CA 28.21 ; Treatise 60-62).

Since justifying faith is awakened and the Church is gathered only by the *pure* preaching of the Gospel and the *evangelical* celebration of the sacraments, communion and its preservation require agreement in the right understanding of the Gospel (CA 7). The Reformation sought such agreement primarily by means of explicit *confessional consensus* documents adopted by congregations and churches. In such a *confessional communion* the communion of churches also finds visible expression.

While the communion of Christians with one another is grounded in common participation in Christ, it is also a community of mutual commitment and participation. Luther says : « This fellowship is twofold : on the one hand we partake of Christ and all saints ; on the other hand we permit all Christians to be partakers of us, in whatever way they and we are able. » (13) Thus *ethical and social action for the good of the neighbor* is also an expression and realization of communion.

CHAPTER III

« COMMUNIO » IN THE CONTEMPORARY ECUMENICAL CONTEXT

1.1. « Communio » in Catholicism

The concept « **communio** » plays an important role in the description of the Church in contemporary Roman Catholic theology. It appeals to New Testament and ancient Church understandings and serves as a corrective to more juridical or legal understandings of the Church. The « **communio** » concept has been called « *the central and fundamental idea* » of the ecclesiology developed by Vatican II. (14)

As in New Testament and ancient theology, Catholic theology interrelates the believers' participation in grace and the divine life and their participation in the communion of the Church. Personal communion with God always creates a « communion of the faithful » one with another. (15)

This communion is realized through the preaching of the Gospel (16) and the administration of the sacraments, (17) especially the Eucharist. « Partaking of the body of the Lord in the breaking of the Eucharistic bread, we are taken up into communion with Him and with one another. » (18) The Church as **communio** is thus essentially a « eucharistic communion, » (19) which itself presupposes a fellowship in faith. This communion is « perfected . . . in the confession of one faith, in the common celebration of divine worship, and in the fraternal harmony of the family of God. » (20)

At the local level, this « communion of the faithful » is made concrete in the particular or local church (e.g., diocese) grounded in the Eucharist and led by the bishop. At the universal level, communion is made concrete as the *communio of local churches*, in which there is room for legitimate diversity. (21)

At every level, a *personal office of leadership* is essential to communion. At the local level, there is the bishop, standing in historical succession and in collegial relations with other bishops. (22) At the universal level, this office is the papacy, with its primacy of teaching and jurisdiction, (23) under whom the bishops can gather together in a council. (24)

Compared to the Lutheran understanding, the specificity of the Roman Catholic understanding of « **communio** » lies in the central role played by the Eucharist. Even more, the « communion of the faithful » has a determinate form, among whose absolutely essential elements are certain offices of leadership, that of the bishop and of the pope.

1.2. « **Communio** » in Orthodoxy

The Orthodox Church is a *communion of churches*, bound together neither by a centralized organization nor through a single official. (25) As primates, patriarchs and archbishops do function as signs of the unity of their churches. The ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople does have a priority of honor as « first among equals. » Nevertheless, the Orthodox churches are unified in love and peace only through communion in faith and sacraments.

The faith which is the basis of this communion is the faith deepened by the interpretations of the Fathers of the ancient Church and affirmed by the *seven ecumenical councils*. For the Orthodox, a council is « not an authority equipped with power to rule over the church » (26) but rather a witness to the Church's self-consciousness. As is shown by several examples in church history, a council takes on its ecumenical, and thus normative, character only after its decisions have been received as true by the whole of the people of the Church. From this perspective clergy and laity are on the same level ; and no authoritative, not to mention infallible, teaching office can take the place of this spiritual unanimity.

The inner catholicity of the Church is the concern here, sometimes referred to by the Russian word « **sobornost**. » Led by the Holy Spirit and gathered around Christ their head, the many faithful have a free common existence, each having a particular gift of grace. As unity and multiplicity are joined together, the life of the Church mirrors the life of the triune God.

The *office of bishop* plays a central role in this process by which the independence of each Orthodox church does not disturb the doctrinal and eucharistic unity of the whole. Standing in apostolic succession, the bishops express the unity of the Church through their ties to one another. This unity in the bishops comes to expression particularly in a *council*, for which the Orthodox are at present preparing. Nevertheless, councils are only one aspect of communion in faith and sacraments. Communion is both an important and a comprehensive concept for the Orthodox. It concerns all members of the Church and can be experienced only by participation in the life of the Church through the power of the Holy Spirit.

This understanding differentiates itself in a variety of ways from Lutheran understandings of communion : for example, in the absolutely central position of the eucharistic celebration, in the significance given to the seven ancient councils, and not least in the office of the bishop in historical succession, which is unconditionally necessary for communion or fellowship between churches. A certain similarity to Lutheran understandings exists,

however, insofar as *communio* is understood as a *spiritual* phenomenon and therefore by nature contains a dimension of openness and freedom.

1.3. « *Communio* » in Anglicanism

The Anglican churches refer to themselves as a *communion* perhaps more than any other group of churches. Historically, the churches of the Anglican Communion all derive in some way from the Church of England and thus share elements of a common cultural heritage. Theologically, they all affirm the four elements of the Lambeth Quadrilateral : Scripture as the ultimate rule of faith, the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the historic episcopate. The common affirmation of these four elements is held to be necessary for the visible unity of the Church and thus necessary for communion between churches.

Communion in the episcopate has been particularly important for Anglicans. The communion of bishops throughout the world and in history realized in episcopal succession focuses and serves the unity of the Church. Thus, of the four « embodiments and agents of unity » within the Anglican Communion, three focus on the episcopate : the « primacy of honor » of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the meeting of the Primates of the Anglican churches, and the Lambeth Conferences of Anglican bishops from around the world. (The fourth, the Anglican Consultative Council, includes also laity and clergy other than bishops.) (27) The emphasis on the episcopate as servant and sign of unity should not obscure, however, the deep Anglican conviction that communion is first and foremost in Christ, his Gospel and sacraments. (28)

Like the Lutheran communion, the Anglican communion is made up of autonomous churches (or provinces). None of the « agents of unity » can make decisions for a particular Anglican church or province. Today Anglicans are struggling with questions of what communion requires. When should a church decide a question for itself without consultation with other churches ? When should it consult other churches before acting ? Are there any questions that should be settled only by some consensus of the churches ? If there are any such questions, what international, communion-wide structures are appropriate for dealing with them ? These questions of authority are at the center of recent Anglican discussions of the nature of the Church as communion. (29)

While sharing much with Lutherans in their understanding of communion, Anglicans are distinguished from them by an emphasis on communion in the office of the historic episcopate.

1.4. « *Communio* » in the Reformed Churches

The center of the Reformed understanding of « **communio** » is the *communion of the faithful with Christ*. Through Word and the Holy Spirit, the faithful enter communion with Christ and become members of his body. (30)

To share in Christ is simultaneously to share in the living communion of the Church. (31)

More than the Lutheran tradition, the Reformed tradition has emphasized the distinction between the *invisible Church*, the « communion of saints, » and the visible Church, the community existing here and now. The invisible Church is the perfect communion of the elect, the angels and the blessed. The visible Church, however, is a community of both the faithful and the hypocritical. (32) Calvin, the Reformed confessions, and recent Reformed theology emphasize that the two must be distinguished but not separated. (33) Their unity is given in Christ, the head of the Body. Preaching and the sacraments ground and nourish individual faith and thus also the communion of the faithful in Christ and their unity (34) Calvin refers to the Church as mother of the faithful. The Church itself contributes to the communion of the individual with Christ, not least through the special ministry instituted within it. (35) This emphasis has receded among contemporary Reformed churches in favor of an emphasis on Christ as bond of communion.

The Reformed tradition has also characteristically emphasized that communion means *common care and concern*. Calvin says that to call the Church a « communion of saints » is « as if one said that the saints were gathered into the society of Christ on the principle that whatever benefits God confers upon them, they should in turn share with one another. » (36) Closely related is the insistence that communion with Christ implies a *responsibility for a new community among all humanity*. The Reformed tradition has constantly emphasized that the Church is by nature a community of witness and service. Here perhaps the Reformed tradition is different from the Lutheran tradition, though only in its emphasis.

The Reformed and Lutheran streams of the Reformation have fundamentally agreed in their understanding of communion. Their differing emphases have never been church-dividing.

2. « Communio » in Lutheranism (37)

Since the second half of the nineteenth century, Lutherans have become increasingly conscious, first, of the worldwide Lutheran communion and then of the broader ecumenical communion. Particularly since the founding of the LWF, the concept of « communion » or « church fellowship » has played an increasingly important, even programmatic role. In the process, New Testament and ancient Church understandings of « *koinonia* » and « *communio* » have been newly appropriated. (38)

Three convictions going back to the Reformers (see II.3) have remained relatively constant in this quest for communion :

First, communion between churches must be communion in the confession of the faith [Kirchengemeinschaft ist Bekenntnisgemeinschaft]. Interchurch aid in time of need and common missionary work and social service are important ; they mediate the experience and con-

sciousness of the reality of communion. Nevertheless, communion is founded in our common faith in the one proclaimed Gospel. This common faith should find expression in a confession which orients the preaching and sacramental practice of the Church in accord with the Gospel. Common confessions have been the decisive mark of Lutheran unity. Individual Lutheran churches, as well as regional and worldwide Lutheran fellowships, have stated a doctrinal basis which includes, after the Bible and the Creeds, the fundamental Lutheran confessions. As Lutherans have sought communion with other traditions, a consensus in the commonly confessed faith has been essential to their quest.

Second, communion in preaching and sacraments is essential to communion between churches. Communion is realized in the living proclamation of the Gospel in Word and sacraments. Thus, Lutheran communion has focussed on « pulpit and altar fellowship » and the mutual recognition of churchly office which that implies, even though communion also seeks realization in other aspects of church life. In general, Lutheran churches have been and are in pulpit and altar fellowship because of their common confession. On occasion fellowship has been lacking because of theological divergences or non-theological factors. Such cases have been seen as abnormal or unacceptable.

Third, communion between churches does not require uniformity in merely human church structures, forms of worship, or church practices, but calls for freedom and legitimate diversity in these areas. Within the Lutheran communion can be found different church structures (both episcopal and non-episcopal), different liturgical traditions, different theological streams, and different forms of piety.

Alongside these shared and constant convictions, however, have been debated questions :

Does « communion in the confession of the faith » require the common acceptance of the same confessional text ? Not only recent theological reflection, but also decisions by the LWF and its member churches have answered this question « No. » (39) The need for a communion in the confession of the faith can be met through a consensus in the understanding of the Gospel and its proclamation in Word and Sacrament. This consensus, however, should be explicitly formulated or at least be capable of formulation.

Does the common confession of the LWF member churches permit, or even demand, a common declaration of altar and pulpit fellowship ? This question was answered « Yes » by the LWF Assembly in Budapest (1984) in its « Statement on the Self-Understanding and Task of the Lutheran World Federation. » This decision was expressed in the concept of « Lutheran communion » and embodied in a constitutional amendment (Art. III,1).

In what forms of common life is communion expressed and realized ? In its Budapest « Statement on Self-Understanding, » the LWF

stated that communion « finds its visible expression » not only in altar and pulpit fellowship, but also « in common witness and service, in the joint fulfillment of the missionary task, and in openness to ecumenical cooperation, dialog, and community. » Such a communion must be « a mutually committed fellowship. »

What kinds of common actions and decisions must the Lutheran communion of churches be able to take, particularly through the LWF as its instrument and expression ? The LWF has defined itself as a « free association of Lutheran churches » (Constitution, Art. III, 1). But can a communion of churches, joined by a common confession in pulpit and altar fellowship, find adequate organizational expression only in a « free association » ? Can a « free association » of churches do what the LWF has in fact done, declaring that apartheid creates in Southern Africa a special situation of confession and suspending the membership of two Southern Africa churches ? (40) Common action has been taken, and thus necessarily common decisions made, since the founding of the LWF. Otherwise the LWF would have been incapable of the common witness and service for which its Constitution calls (Art. III). The problem arises when a decision or action claims to commit authoritatively the entire communion and its member churches. Is such a decision authoritative only if and when it is received and agreed to by the individual churches ? Or do such decisions *as decisions of the communion* already commit the individual churches ? About what matters and under what conditions can such decisions be made ? Who would make such decisions and by what process ? These and similar questions are still being debated. The concept of communion itself implies no particular answer to these questions, but life in communion does require some forms of common and authoritative decision making. (41)

« Communion » [**Kirchengemeinschaft**] has been important not only for Lutheran unity but also for Lutheran participation in *ecumenical discussions and efforts*. This became particularly evident in 1977 at the LWF Assembly in Dar es Salaam, when « unity in reconciled diversity » was adopted as a guiding principle in Lutheran ecumenical efforts. (42) This concept was developed further, with explicit use of the concept of communion, in the 1984 Budapest Assembly statement on « The Unity We Seek. » (43) Especially in the 1980's, bilateral dialogues involving Lutherans have turned to concepts of communion to explicate their understanding of the ecumenical goal. (44)

3. « **Communio** » in Ecumenical Dialogues

1. The concept « communion » has been of decisive significance for the modern ecumenical movement. For all Christian traditions, the Church is simultaneously a communion with Christ in the Holy Spirit, a communion of churches or congregations, and a communion of the faithful. « Communion » thus describes not only the essence of the individual churches but also the unity sought. The concept entered ecumenical dialogues particularly when

attempts were made to gather together the initial results and take concrete steps toward a growing together of the churches. It became clear that « unity » needed both interpretation and qualification. In the attempt to understand more precisely and to live out more faithfully the unity of the Church, the understanding of the Church as **communio** readily suggested itself, even if this understanding varied according to tradition and situation (see above, III.1).

2. The *World Council of Churches* led the way in the ecumenical development of the concept of communion. The Assembly in New Delhi (1961) described the unity we seek in terms of communion :

We believe that the unity which is both God's will and his gift to his Church is being made visible as all in each place who are baptized into Jesus Christ and confess him as Lord and Saviour are brought by the Holy Spirit into one fully committed fellowship, holding the one apostolic faith, preaching the one Gospel, breaking the one bread, joining in common prayer, and having a corporate life reaching out in witness and service to all.

In the Assembly's « Commentary, » this description is expanded :

The word 'fellowship' (**koinonia**) [i.e., communion] has been chosen because it describes what the Church truly is. 'Fellowship' clearly implies that the Church is not merely an institution or organization. It is a fellowship of those who are called together by the Holy Spirit and in Baptism confess Christ as Lord and Saviour. They are thus 'fully committed' to him and to one another. Such a fellowship means for those who participate in it nothing less than a renewed mind and spirit, a full participation in common praise and prayer, the shared realities of penitence and forgiveness, mutuality in suffering and joy, listening together to the same Gospel, responding in faith, obedience, and service, joining in the one mission of Christ in the world, a self-forgetting love for all for whom Christ died, and the reconciling grace which breaks down every wall of race, color, caste, tribe, sex, class, and nation. Neither does this 'fellowship' imply a rigid uniformity of structure, organization, or government. A lively variety marks corporate life in the one Body of one Spirit. (45)

A few years later, the Decree on Ecumenism of *Vatican II* said similarly : « It is the Holy Spirit . . . who brings about that marvelous communion of the faithful and joins them together so intimately in Christ that He is the principle of the Church's unity. . . . Christ perfects the people's communion in unity. » (46)

3. In more recent years, « **communio**, » « communion, » and « church fellowship » have become increasingly important in the *ecumenical dialogues*. Nevertheless, different understandings of « **communio** » appear when one tries more precisely to describe which elements are constitutive for communion or fellowship among churches and how these elements are to be related to each other (see above, III.1 and 2).

3.1. The most extensive understanding of « **communio** » is found in the *Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue*. Here emphasis falls both on communion in faith, which is necessary for unity, and communion in the sacraments, which is a condition and fruit of communion in faith. These two forms of communion are two sides of a single reality. (47) Each side receives a characteristic interpretation in the dialogue. On the one hand, faith includes « the totality of doctrine and church practice. » (48) Among the criteria for this faith is « the continuity of the tradition » (along with the doxological and soteriological meanings of the faith). (49) On the other hand, agreement in faith makes possible communion in the sacraments, which finds its highest expression in the Eucharist. Each Eucharist in each place is the full expression of the full, true communion of all local churches in the one Christ, which is the mystery of the Church. (50)

3.2. The conditions for true communion are formulated in a more differentiated way in the *dialogues among Rome and the churches of the Reformation*. Full communion includes communion in Word, in the sacraments, and in ministry. Different dialogues, however, spell out this assertion in different ways.

The *Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue* has explicitly focussed on « **koinonia** » as the central concept for understanding the Church and its unity. **Koinonia** is both participation in the saving work of Christ and also the communion of Christians with each other. **Koinonia** is « grounded in the Word of God preached, believed, and obeyed ; » « established » through Baptism ; and « sustained » through the Eucharist. « Full visible communion » between churches requires « mutual recognition of sacraments and ministry, together with the common acceptance of a universal primacy. » (51)

The *Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue* has emphasized the same constitutive elements of communion but does not speak of the necessity of a universal office of unity (52) Communion is a gift of God's grace, mediated through Word, the sacraments, and the indispensable office of ministry. It expresses itself in the unity of faith, hope, and love and seeks a visible form. This form does not require uniformity but rather allows for legitimate diversity. In accord with the image and analogy of the triune God, this unity encompasses all Christians and is oriented toward the unity of all humanity. (53)

The realization of such communion is a step-by-step process of coming together. Decisive steps have already been taken. The most difficult problem remains the still incomplete communion in ministerial office. Here special weight is placed on the contention that only within communion in ministry can communion in Word and sacraments take on its full, visible form and normative character. (54)

The still imperfect communion in ministry is a central problem also in the dialogues between Rome and other Reformation churches. (55)

3.3 In *dialogues among the Reformation churches*, the communion sought between the churches has predominantly been understood as communion

in Word and sacraments and described by the phrases « church fellowship » (**Kirchengemeinschaft**) or « full communion. »

A significant example is the *communion or fellowship between Lutheran and Reformed*. This communion is already a reality in Europe through the Leuenberg Agreement (1973). (56) Its extension throughout the world has been recommended by the international dialogue. (57) A full agreement in Word and sacraments is the necessary and sufficient condition of communion (see CA 7). (58) This agreement is established through a doctrinal consensus about Word and sacraments, which includes the lifting of earlier doctrinal condemnations. Communion in Word and sacraments (i.e., pulpit and altar fellowship) includes a mutual recognition of ordination. Here again a communion in ministry is important, even if clearly subordinate to communion in Word and sacraments. The communion declared, however, must then be realized in the concrete life of the churches. It impels the churches toward communion in witness and service in the world.

A different weight is given to communion in ministry in the *Lutheran-Anglican dialogue*. Among Reformation churches, the Anglicans place particular emphasis on episcopacy in historic succession as a bond of communion (see above, III.1.3), without denying the apostolicity of churches not in such a succession. Full communion is more than communion in Word and sacraments ; it includes communion in ministry. (59) Lutheran-Anglican dialogues have agreed, however, that office and succession do not stand on the same level as the other elements of communion, Word and sacraments. This communion finds expression also in a communion in mission and service in the world. (60)

This necessary communion in witness has been consistently emphasized by the dialogues among the Reformation churches.

NOTES

- (1). C. H. Dodd, **The Johannine Epistles**, The Moffatt New Testament Commentary (London : Hodder and Stoughton, 1975), pp. 6-9. To these may be added the Old Testament concept of « corporate personality, » i.e., « basic human solidarity among all the sons of Adam, » and the New Testament expressions that contain the term « with » (Greek : **syn**) as found for e.g. in Rom. 6 :3-11 ; 8 :17 ; 2 Cor. 7 :3 ; Col. 3 :1 ; Eph. 2 :6. See Michael McDermott, « The Biblical Doctrine of **Koinonia**, » **Biblische Zeitschrift**, 19 N.F. (1975) : 66.
- (2). McDermott, p. 65.
- (3). Cf. F. Hauck, art. « **koinonia** » in **Theological Dictionary of the New Testament**, ed. by Gerhard Kittel (Grand Rapids : Eerdmans, 1965), vol. 3, pp. 1746ff. Josef Hainz, **Koinonia : « Kirche » als Gemeinschaft bei Paulus. Biblische Untersuchungen** (Regensburg : Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 1982).
- (4). Paul S. Minear, **Images of the Church in the New Testament** (London : Lutterworth Press, 1961), p. 185.
- (5). Schuyler Brown, « **Koinonia** as the Basis of New Testament Ecclesiology ?, » **One in Christ**, 12 (1976) : p. 163.
- (6). Georg Kretschmar, « Gemeinschaft der Heiligen im Neuen Testament und in der frühen Kirche, » **Una Sancta**, 43 (1988) : 266-276.
- (7). Eugene L. Brand, **Toward a Lutheran Communion**, p. 14.
- (8). Werner Elert, **Eucharist and Church Fellowship in the First Four Centuries** (Saint Louis : Concordia, 1966), pp. 8, 209-218.
- (9). As is shown in this and other texts, the concepts « **communio** » and « **congregatio** » are equivalent and synonymous : « **sanctorum congregatiuncula et communio**. »
- (10). « Confession Concerning Christ's Supper, » **LW-AE**, vol. 37, p. 356 (WA 26,493).
- (11). « A Sermon on the Ban, » **LW-AE**, vol. 39, p. 7 (WA 6,64 ; 1,639).
- (12). *Ibid.*, p. 8.
- (13). « The Blessed Sacrament of the Holy and True Body of Christ, and the Brotherhoods, » **LW-AE**, vol. 35, p. 67 (WA 2,754).
- (14). 1985 Extraordinary Synod of Bishops.
- (15). Vatican II, Decree on Ecumenism, 2.
- (16). Vatican II, Decree on Ecumenism, 2 ; Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, 51 ; Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, 21.
- (17). Vatican 2, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, 7 ; cp. Decree on Ecumenism, 22.
- (18). Vatican II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, 7.

- (19). Vatican II, Decree on Ecumenism, 22.
- (20). *Ibid.*, 2.
- (21). Vatican II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, 13, 23, 26, and *passim* ; cp. Code of Canon Law, cc. 368f.
- (22). Code of Canon Law, c. 369.
- (23). Cp. Vatican II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, 22 ; Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church, 4.
- (24). Cp. Vatican II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, 22.
- (25). Among the Orthodox churches, one distinguishes between autocephalous and autonomous churches on that basis of their different organizational status. These often national churches are often called « local churches, » although they are not « local churches » in the usual sense of a diocese. See John Zizioulas, **Being as Communion** (London : 1985), pp. 251-253.
- (26). Alexander Schmemmann, « Der Begriff des Primates in der orthodoxen Ekklesiologie, » in **Der Primat des Petrus in der orthodoxen Kirche**, ed. Boris Bobrinsky (Zürich : 1961), p. 136.
- (27). On these bonds of unity, see **The Truth Shall Make You Free : The Lambeth Conference 1988** : The Reports, Resolutions & Pastoral Letters from the Bishops (London : Anglican Consultative Council, 1988), pp. 110f.
- (28). See, e.g., Archbishop Runcie's Opening Address to the 1988 Lambeth Conference, in **The Lambeth Conference 1988**, especially p. 19.
- (29). See here especially the so-called Eames Report, **Report of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Communion and Women in the Episcopate** (London : Anglican Consultative Council, 1989).
- (30). Heidelberg Catechism, Q. 32. See also questions 31.
- (31). *Ibid.*, Qq. 54f. Westminster Confession, XXVI,1,2.
- (32). John Calvin, **Institutes of the Christian Religion**, IV.1.2-7 ; Westminster Confession, XXV,1-2,4-5.
- (33). *Ibid.*, IV.1.3. See also the Geneva Catechism, Part I, 92- 105, as well as the Heidelberg Catechism, Qq. 54f. Among recent Reformed theologians, see K. Barth, **Church Dogmatics**, IV/1, p. 669.
- (34). Calvin, **Institutes**, IV.1.1 ; 2.4 ; and Heidelberg Catechism, Qq. 75, 77.
- (35). **Institutes**, IV.1.4 ; IV.3.
- (36). **Institutes**, IV.1.3. See also Heidelberg Catechism, Q. 55.
- (37). See here especially Eugene L. Brand, **Toward a Lutheran Communion**.
- (38). In the work of the LWF Theological Commission in years before the Assemblies in Minneapolis (1957) and Helsinki (1963), the concept of « communion » or « fellowship » moved steadily to the center. See **The Unity of the Church : A Symposium**, Papers presented to the Commissions on Theology and Liturgy of the Lutheran World Federation (Rock Island, Illinois : Augustana Press, 1957) and **The Nature of the Lutheran World Federation** : Preparatory Document no. 4, 4th LWF Assembly (Geneva : LWF, 1963). Much of this discussion took place in German and thus spoke of « Kirchengemeinschaft. » « Gemeinschaft » can be translated into English as « fellowship, » « community, » or « communion. » Since the term « Kirchengemeinschaft » took up important aspects of the New Testament and ancient Church idea of « *communio* » and « *koinonia*, » here it will be translated as « communion. » This connection with earlier concepts can be seen in **Koinonia : Arbeiten des Oekumenischen Ausschusses der Vereinigten Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche Deutschlands zur Frage der Kirchen- und Abendmahlsgemeinschaft** (Berlin : Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1957).

(39). Note, e.g., the admission of Indonesian churches into the LWF, although they do not recognize the Augsburg Confession ; the Evian « Statement Concerning the Attitude of the LWF to Churches in Union Negotiations » (**Sent into the World : Proceedings of the Fifth Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation**, pp. 142f) ; and the acceptance of the Leuenberg Agreement by the majority of European Lutheran churches, bringing them into communion with churches with Reformed and United confessional bases.

(40). For a discussion of this action, see **The Debate on Status Confessionis : Studies in Christian Political Theology**, LWF Studies (Geneva, 1983).

(41). The Budapest Assembly stated that « the unity we seek . . . is a committed fellowship, able to make common decisions and to act in common. » (« Statement on the Unity We Seek, » **Budapest 1984**, p. 175.)

(42). This action was the fruition of discussions going back to the work of the LWF Theology Commission before the Minneapolis LWF Assembly (1957) and even more before the Helsinki Assembly (1963). See the references above in nt. 38, especially « The Nature of the Lutheran World Federation. »

(43). See **Budapest 1984 : Official Proceedings of the Seventh Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation**, **LWF Report** 19/20 (1985) :175.

(44). See especially the Lutheran-Roman Catholic documents **Ways to Community** (1981) and **Facing Unity** (1985), the Lutheran-Reformed document **Toward Church Fellowship** (1989), and the Lutheran-Anglican **Niagara Report** (1987).

(45). Report of the Section on Unity, Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches, §§2, 11.

(46). Vatican II, Decree on Ecumenism, 2-4 ; here §2.

(47). See especially the second document of the international Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue, **Faith, Sacraments, and the Unity of the Church**, Bari, 1987, §36.

(48). Ibid., 6,7.

(49). Ibid., 28-32.

(50). Ibid., 23f and 34ff.

(51). Preface to the Final Report of ARCIC I (1981). The preface contains an extended analysis of the concept of *koinonia*.

(52). See especially the documents which address this theme : **Ways to Community** (1980) and **Facing Unity** (1985).

(53). See here **Ways to Community**, §§ 1-52.

(54). The question of communion in ministry is one of the foci of the document **Facing Unity**. See especially §§ 86ff.

(55). E.g., the Methodist-Roman Catholic dialogues, 4th series, 1982-86, sections 29-76 and the Reformed-Roman Catholic dialogue **The Presence of Christ in Church and World** (1977), sections 93-108.

(56). On the understanding of communion or fellowship, especially in the Leuenberg Agreement, see H. Meyer, « Zur Entstehung und Bedeutung des Konzepts 'Kirchengemeinschaft' : Eine historische Skizze aus evangelischer Sicht, » in **Communio Sanctorum : Einheit der Christen--Einheit der Kirche**, FS P.-W. Scheele, ed. Josef Schreiner & Klaus Wittstadt (Würzburg : Echter, 1988), especially pp. 219ff.

(57). See the international Lutheran-Reformed dialogue, **Toward Church Fellowship** (1989).

(58). For what follows, see the Leuenberg Agreement, especially §§29-34.

(59). The nature of full communion is discussed in detail in the Report of the Anglican-Lutheran International Joint Working Group, **The Cold Ash Report** (1983), §§ 24-34.

(60). Report of Anglican-Lutheran International Continuation Committee, **The Niagara Report**, Ch. 1.

